

**Disaster Recovery for Delaware: Exploring
Potential Partnerships among Emergency Planners,
First Responders, Librarians and Others**

**Tuesday, February 28, 2017 | Dover Downs,
Delaware**

Second Responders



DelawareLibraries.org

FINAL REPORT

From 9 AM to 4 PM on Tuesday, February 28, 2017, librarians and local and state emergency managers met at the Rollins Conference Center of the Dover Downs Hotel and Casino to explore developing partnerships among their communities for emergency preparedness and response. The meeting was convened and sponsored by the Middle Atlantic Region of the National Network of Libraries of Medicine (NNLM MAR), the Delaware Division of Libraries, and the University of Delaware's Disaster Research Center. This report contains the minutes of the meeting followed by "Takeaways." The portions of the report in italic print interspersed throughout are the descriptions of each presentation, copied from the day's agenda.

The Planning Committee for the meeting included

- Renae Barger, NNLM MAR
- Michelle Burda, NNLM MAR
- Ingrid Hansen, Delaware Medical Reserve Corps
- Sarah Katz, Health Sciences Library, University of Delaware
- Cathay Keough, Delaware Division of Libraries
- Annie Norman, Delaware Division of Libraries
- Elaina Vitale, NNLM MAR
- Alison Wessel, Delaware Department of Health and Social Services Library
- Dan Wilson, Claude Moore Health Sciences Library, University of Virginia
- Pat Young, Disaster Research Center, University of Delaware

The stated purpose of the meeting was:

"...to connect library staff with emergency planners to help communities bounce back more quickly following a natural or man-made disaster. The focus is on developing partnerships and strategies before an emergency happens. Emergency responders will speak on ways libraries can assist them in mitigation and preparedness, response and recovery. An education component will incorporate National Library of Medicine resources, focusing on health and disaster information, to support responders and the community, and library staff. We will explore what it means for a library to be a 'second responder' for their respective emergency planning and patron communities." (Disaster

Recovery for Delaware, https://nnlm.gov/class/de_disaster_summit, accessed March 8, 2017)



Dan Wilson, Associate Director for Library Collections and Services at the Claude Moore Health Sciences Library at the University of Virginia, and an experienced trainer in emergency preparedness for libraries, facilitated the meeting. He began the meeting by welcoming the speakers and participants and providing an overview of the theme and content of the day and materials distributed. He recognized the Planning Committee and special guests Jacqueline Leskovec from Chicago (the Greater Midwest Region of NNLM), Michele Stricker, Deputy State Librarian for Lifelong Learning, New Jersey State Libraries, and Susan Yowell, Information Consultant, who would be taking minutes of the meeting and writing the follow-up report.

Annie Norman, State Librarian of Delaware, expressed appreciation to the sponsors of the meeting and especially to the emergency planning community. She noted that the Governor of Delaware had recently signed a bill for support of resources including library technology as part of the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness (GEAR) program in Delaware schools.



Michelle Burda, NNLM MAR, spoke about NNLM and its relationship to NLM and NIH. She noted that NNLM provides education and funding for biomedical information research and outreach, and provided an overview of activities in their region, which includes Delaware.



"Partners in Rebuilding: Libraries, Community Partners and Emergency Responders,"—*Quinn and Terjesen experienced Superstorm Sandy first hand. They will discuss their experiences and lessons learned from collaborative disaster response and recovery efforts involving Ocean County libraries and area emergency managers.*

Susan Quinn, Library Director, Ocean County Library (NJ) and Leslie D. Terjesen, Public Information Officer Coordinator, Office of Public Information, Education and Outreach, Ocean County (NJ) Health Department

Susan Quinn and Leslie Terjesen

Quinn and Terjesen experienced Superstorm Sandy (2012) first hand. Their presentation related their experiences and lessons learned from collaborative disaster response and recovery efforts involving Ocean County libraries and area emergency managers.

- Ocean County's public library system has 21 branches, the largest system in the state. Sixteen of the branches are on the coast or on waterways because they are located in the most populated areas.
- Their library system is fortunate to have strong financial support and great facilities and technology. They had emergency generator backup in many locations.
- The library system has always had a strong partnership with the county's Health Department—the Health Department uses the libraries to help distribute information and to help meet the information needs of the public.
- Tourism is very important to the NJ economy, so a hurricane devastates the economy as well as property. Even away from the coast there was much damage.
- Lessons learned:
 - partnerships allow each partner to accomplish much more than either could accomplish alone, creating better use of available resources
 - before disaster strikes, establish communication and trust with planners and other organizations



The Story of the Partnership Quilt

In 1993, Ocean County, NJ held a 3-day event called "Future Search," as part of the planning process for their first Community Health Improvement Plan. The outcome was the "Building a Healthy Ocean County" (BHOC) coalition. It was comprised of working groups, e.g. women's health, adolescent health, family values (faith-based), transportation, and technology. The Ocean County Library System led the technology group. The BHOC lasted for 10 years. After 9/11/2001, the NJ Department of Health created a new position, Partnership Coordinator, which superseded the Chairperson of the BHOC. When the quilt was created, each of the working groups who were part of the coalition contributed a square. Now, years later, Leslie noted that many of these same people are still involved in these areas of improving community health, and the partnership between Public Health and the Ocean County Library System is still strong.

"Improving Access to Disaster Health Information"—*This program highlights resources from the National Library of Medicine's Disaster Information Management Research Center that apply to the mitigation and preparedness, response and recovery phases for emergency planners, first responders, librarians, or any organization involved with disaster planning response, and/or recovery.*

Siobhan Champ-Blackwell, Disaster Information Management Research Center (DIMRC), Specialized Information Services, National Library of Medicine (<https://disaster.nlm.nih.gov/dimrc.html>)

Siobhan spoke about the programs and tools available from DIMRC for emergency managers and for anyone interested in assisting with information management in the event of disaster.

- Disaster Information Specialist training program (<http://www.mlanet.org/education/dis/>), which trains information specialists to become “information responders” in their communities. It provides classes, webinars, and other networking opportunities to promote the role of information specialists.
- Apps developed by NLM to assist first responders, but for all information specialists
 - WISER—Wireless Information System for Emergency Responders
 - REMM—Radiation Emergency Medical Management
 - CHEMM—Chemical Hazards Emergency Medical Management

Siobhan noted that often emergency responders are more aware of the tools and information available than are librarians. DIMRC specializes in providing the right/best information to enable good decision-making.

Michelle Burda, Education and Health Literacy Coordinator, National Network of Libraries of Medicine, Middle Atlantic Region (NNLM MAR) (<https://nnlm.gov/mar>) with offices in Pittsburgh.

To demonstrate the importance of NLM and other government health information resources during an emergency situation Michelle shared a recent incident in Pittsburgh. A precautionary boil water advisory was issued because it was determined that the city’s water supply maybe be unsafe to drink. The reach of the advisory was widespread and immediate affecting people in offices, homes, hospitals, schools, public libraries, academic institutions, commuters, and visitors in the city.

She emphasized the importance of using MedlinePlus as a resource to find reliable information during an emergency health-related event so that the information communicated could be understood by the public. It is important to know the source and date created for of all information that is shared. MedlinePlus was highlighted as a consumer friendly web site that is easy to use for both the public and those providing information during an emergency. She referred to the DIMRC resources, e.g. the easily searched database of articles with papers, guidelines, conference proceedings, toolboxes, and other helpful resources, as well as the apps described by Siobhan.

NNLM MAR offers membership, training and funding opportunities to institutions and organizations.

“Emergency Planners: Opportunities for Libraries Panel Discussion”—*Dan Wilson, a specialist in disaster planning for libraries, will lead the panel to assess each planner’s role in a disaster; their vision of how libraries and library staff can support their efforts in mitigation and preparedness, response and recovery, and strategies to put into place to build Delaware’s community resilience before an emergency happens.*

Panel Members:

Dave Carpenter, Coordinator of Emergency Management, New Castle County

George Giles, Director, Office of Emergency Management, City of Wilmington

Tim Cooper, Director, Office of Preparedness, Delaware Division of Public Health

Joshua L. Kelly, Operations Planner, Delaware Emergency Management Agency

Dan noted some of the roles for libraries in mitigation and preparedness based on the One-Page Disaster Plan template. He also recommended the book, *Lights Out*, by Ted Koppel, which is an eye-opening alert about the probability of a massive, long-term power outage in the United States. He recommended that libraries present programming to support sustainability at home during a disaster—not only having disaster kits ready, but also educating about gardening and other skills important to living without electrical power. Each emergency planner was asked to introduce himself and to explain what his role is in planning for and responding to disasters.



George Giles, Joshua Kelly, Tim Cooper, Dave Carpenter, Dan Wilson

Dave Carpenter, Coordinator of Emergency Management, New Castle County—has some experience in working with libraries. They have used several libraries as continuity sites, and as alternate government sites for county office since 2009.

Tim Cooper, Director, Office of Preparedness, Delaware Division of Public Health—DEMA and Delaware counties have resource requests and they are pushed up to Public Health if applicable. Every disaster has public health impacts. Tim's department works to prepare the community for storms, but also for public health emergencies like infectious diseases, such as Ebola and Zika. Tim was just starting in his position when Superstorm Sandy came, and he used it as a window of opportunity to develop partnerships. He teaches in a nursing school and a technical school as well, helping students learn about responding to health emergencies. He can see how libraries can help with all these. As funding dries up, they appreciate the free community space at libraries. Libraries are a great way to reach the community because people are already going there. He does see that libraries can help with response, such as serving as cooling centers during heat waves, providing access to computers and internet plus helping with computer literacy issues for the public in an emergency.

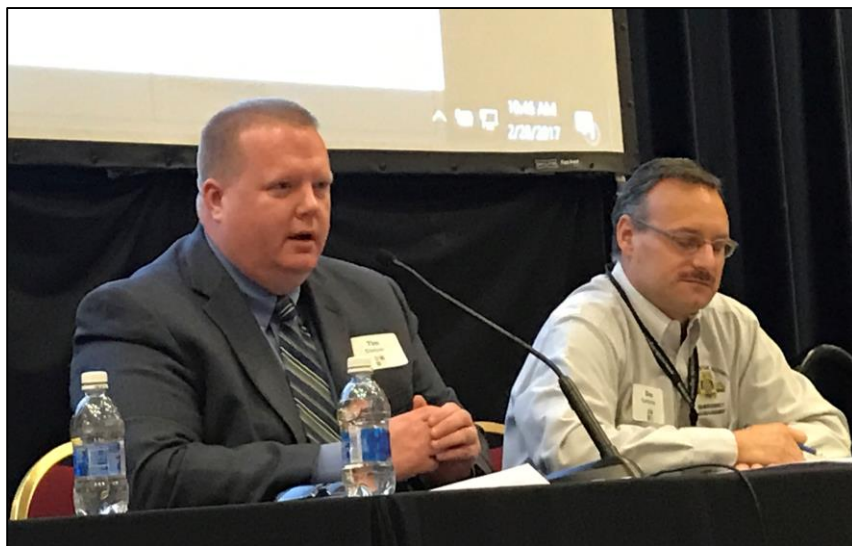
Joshua Kelly, Operations Planner, Delaware Emergency Management Agency—he brings together many plans. He spent eight years in disaster research and management at the Disaster Research Center at the University of Delaware. Before that, he worked a lot with libraries in Texas—they helped with training and provided use of space. He noticed that people are most likely to go somewhere they trust—libraries—for training and information. His department is charged with helping businesses as well as individuals after a disaster.

George Giles, Director, Office of Emergency Management, City of Wilmington--all their disasters start locally; the response goes statewide. George was a firefighter for 30 years, and noted that mitigation, preparedness and recovery do not come into the vocabulary of first responders. He believes Delaware does a very good job of mitigation—hazards are identified for the state and for library facilities. The focus for his department has been on recovering hospitals and nursing homes first—they may not have considered libraries as priorities in the past.

Because Delaware is so small, it is handled as one entity. There is a very different “sleeping population” as opposed to daytime population. He recognizes issues with homeless people who already use libraries as refuges. He believes the partnership with libraries will work really well. They can take the training program and tailor it to the needs of their patrons. He would be concerned with whether power at the library can sustain services over time; whether just certain aspects or the whole building. How long will a facility be able to be used as a shelter rather than their normal jobs, like schools? People may have to be moved to make way for return to business of some facilities.

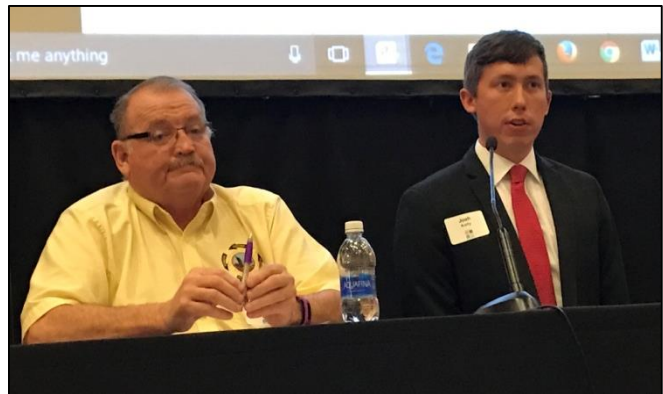
Questions and comments from the audience:

- Annie Norman—The Delaware State Library works with all public libraries in the state, so can be the conduit for communicating with them, also has a statewide partners list, started to help people in need. Encourages emergency managers to use the State Library to contact libraries and to send out information.
- Dave Carpenter—schools are often among the first things to re-open; a big help in returning a community to normalcy. Many preparedness educational activities are concentrated in National Preparedness Month, which is September. They could use some help from libraries during that month to help get information out, maybe through reading programs to kids, etc.
- Dan asked how social media fits into the roles of these managers and how might libraries be able to help with it.



Tim Cooper and Dave Carpenter

- Tim Cooper—Public Health has a robust notification system; they are trying to take the burden off the hospitals. They see social media as an extra component and have ramped up its use over the past three years.
- They have a person dedicated to managing social media and have prepared messages for certain situations. Social media can help make sure the right message is getting out, hopefully counteracting citizen-produced information which may or may not be accurate. They try to make sure other organizations are re-tweeting the Public Health information.
- Dave Carpenter—the county pushes their information to the state organization, and the Joint Information Center sends it out to all the Public Information Officers for the various state organizations. This ensures that one message is being sent out among all agencies. He thinks libraries could help with updating social media content but is not sure how they could push it out—could possibly help monitor social media sites. They have to be careful using non-essential workers for essential work.
- Joshua Kelly—they have systems that automatically post to all sites; these are managed by the Public Information Officer. “Digital volunteers” have been used in other areas, such as taking the “temperature” of the public, identifying what kinds of information people are looking for.
- Dave Carpenter gave an example of misinformation that was disseminated and the damage it can do, recalling posts about the Indian River Bridge, which was reported washed away, but there was uncertainty about whether the news was real and even which bridge it was. This required hours on social media to correct.
- George Giles agreed that social media can be very hard to control, and that the Public Information Officers try to stay on top of it.
- Joshua Kelly’s department gathered information from social media and went out to determine “ground truth” when needed. It’s important to know when and where an image was created—this could be a potential role for librarians—helping to validate content of social media.
- Dave Carpenter—the county’s internal network would not be accessible in libraries due to required security protocols, so working from a library space may be more challenging than first thought.
- Tim Cooper—they do try to identify trusted resources, and had not thought of libraries being in that group, but he sees they are at the most connected level in their communities.
- Siobhan Champ-Blackwell—social media is just one method of sending and receiving information; librarians can evaluate information from any site or resource, as they are trained as information experts. How can the emergency community use these skill sets?
- Joshua Kelly—given that librarians could help with evaluating and organizing information, it should be understood that there will be some administrative/hierarchical hurdles to be overcome.



George Giles and Joshua Kelly

- Dave Carpenter mentioned the importance that GIS has attained, and that librarians could assist with pushing out information. He cautioned against “mission creep,” as organizations must be selective of areas to focus on and not take on too much; find the area that best suits the needs.
- Pat Young asked whether it would of value to educate library personnel about the “lingo” or unique language used by the emergency management community in order to facilitate the response to recovery phase.
 - George Giles—they prefer to deal with the community in plain language rather than lingo, and in making the message as plain as possible.
 - Joshua Kelly—finds the lingo isn’t applicable and focuses on plain language because of the variety of people involved. He does recommend taking the online ICS courses from FEMA if librarians want to become familiar with the lingo.
 - Dave Carpenter—DEMA offers a condensed course; he recommends the 7 level, which describes the framework for emergency management at the national level.
 - Susan Quinn—when FEMA came to their locality after Superstorm Sandy, the library sent out the FEMA information from a flash drive to all their branches. Their emergency management people used plain language, but she would have liked more familiarity with the ICS language.
 - Siobhan Champ-Blackwell—the Disaster Information Specialist program includes information on the language classes.
- An audience member added that the greatest ally emergency managers can have is a prepared citizen. Each person should be prepared to be self-sufficient for 72 hours to allow professional responders to address urgent needs. He emphasized the importance of CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) training, which is free.
- Ed Tyczkowski, Planner with the Delaware Emergency Management Agency, urged libraries to be prepared themselves in order to be able to help their communities after an incident. There are two action items coming up for Delaware, one having to do with state libraries and keeping libraries open.
- Joe Cochran, a Planner from the New Castle County Emergency Management department, has worked with libraries on active shooter training.
- A former police officer—often our focus is on large-scale disasters, but other issues can be disasters that don’t destroy property. Consider mental health needs after a situation, e.g. a tragic Department of Corrections situation in Delaware recently. We often focus on getting our “things” back in order to the detriment of our mental health.
- Annie noted that DSEM are great partners with the state library, and they are expanding library services across DHSS.

Closing remarks from the panel:

- Emergency managers don’t want to meet partners for the first time during an emergency. It is very important to establish partnerships among libraries and the emergency management community soon.
- Take training to facilitate networking with emergency managers
- They see the possibility for some great partnerships with libraries
- Include in training how to best provide resources to people with access issues
- Take CERT training and volunteer

- Would like to target a timeframe to re-convene and make a timeline for following up—keep the momentum of this meeting going

Bethany Hall-Long, Delaware Lieutenant Governor

Lieutenant Governor Hall-Long spoke during the lunch part of the meeting. She has a history of being supportive of libraries, has also been involved in public health and public policy, and has taught at the University of Delaware School of Nursing.



Cathay Keough and Lt. Gov Hall-Long

The Lieutenant Governor recalled early talks about how a small, mighty state can create big things, and was excited that this day has come to fruition. She appreciated the awesome opportunity to collaborate with partners, and noted the importance of cradle to grave disaster preparedness. She commended the participants for discussing disaster preparedness now, as most people don't think of it until a major storm is approaching. She expressed confidence in librarians to put this initiative to work, and hoped that everyone would leave with a roadmap, and toolkit, and a plan for what comes next.

She asked what resources they might need, and what ideas they have for building on their planning

regionally. The new Governor of Delaware is pleased and supportive of her presence at the meeting; he favors strong education, and knows how important volunteers are to the system. She would like Delaware to be a shining example of how volunteers can make a difference. She emphasized the value of the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) as a key player in both preparedness and response. Volunteers for MRC can be non-medical. MRC addresses many health-related issues, not just emergencies and mass casualties. The Lieutenant Governor encouraged all to contact her or her assistants at any time and offered meeting space at her office. She noted that her office is always open, and encouraged everyone to leave with an action plan.



Cathay Keough, Lt. Gov. Hall-Long, Ingrid Hansen, Pat Young

“Exploring Libraries as Second Responders”

Breakout sessions with a representative from each of the three Delaware counties to explore the library’s role as a second responder. Attendees explored options and planning as is relevant to their county.



Joe Cochran and the New Castle County group



Joshua Kelly and the Kent County group

Reports from the county groups

Sussex County

Participants regretted that Joe Thomas, their emergency management person, was not there. Highlights of their discussion:



- They have lots of visitors to the beach—having a template for responses (e.g. evacuation routes) would be helpful. They could provide maps and work with rental agencies to get information about responses out to the public, possibly including information on hotel keys. Sharing with the realtor board might result in realty companies becoming a distribution resource.
- Would be helpful to compile and distribute a list of do's and don'ts, risks, for visitors from outside the area
- CERT programs in libraries is a good idea. May Day (May 1), a possible target date.
- Emergency management could place a resource table at libraries
- Recovery/disaster kit training important for library staff
- Libraries could solicit supplies for emergency preparedness kits as donations to those who cannot afford to make one for themselves
- University of Delaware has a text messaging service that walks people through working out a plan
- Thrift stores, dollar stores for outreach to at-risk community –totes, boxes
- Shelter 101 training
- HOSA (Health Occupations Student of America) has been working on creating “Diversion Kits” for shelters to help entertain children who have been relocated from their homes. Also useful, the bookmobile, donations of books and magazines—students could use partners—follow up with Ingrid.
- Coordination of shelters by Joe Thomas, DHSS, Red Cross, National Guard, DOE, DEMA—town to county to state to federal.
- Other libraries support the libraries in a disaster area

Kent County

Joshua Kelly and Ed Tyczkowski

This group stayed basic and focused on things they could start on now.

- Emergency managers showing up for events like this and inviting librarians
- Producing public safety training, e.g. CERT, for library staff in emergency management, put flyers, information packets at the library; help start the discussion with patrons, e.g. pets in emergencies
- Build everyday relationships between EMs and librarians
- EMs need to know the needs from libraries—generators, training, etc.
- Communication is very important, incorporating emergency managers, promoting networking, hosting special events



Ed Tyczkowski and Joshua Kelly

New Castle County

Joe Cochran

- Seeing the library as a tremendous resource, libraries are always packed
- Focus on preparedness
- Resource sharing between academic, public schools, public libraries, medical libraries, agencies—expanding beyond consortium
- Continuity of Operations (COOP)—how a library gets back to doing its normal business—is another thing that needs to be done ahead of emergencies/disasters, not during or after
- Helping get the message out, cross-communication is important—sharing each other's materials
- Preparedness week could be publicized in the libraries, developing a theme with book displays and classes
- Invite emergency and medical professionals to speak at libraries to their communities
- Libraries could send out regular safety tips via their social media
- Would be helpful to have long-term after-care resources available at libraries
- Librarians are great teachers; these skills could be used in educating the public about emergencies and safety



Joe Cochran

- Libraries could be considered as drop sites for water

Dan asked Michelle Burda and Joshua Kelly to speak about any funding possibilities that might exist for carrying out some of these ideas, such as community events on preparedness.

Joshua Kelly—there is some funding for hazard mitigation, which covers 75% of the total cost of developing mitigation measures. Further funding is available in the event of a disaster, e.g. raising flood walls, purchasing generators. Dan mentioned the Stafford Act, which enables FEMA support to re-locate libraries after disasters. Joshua added that this can take place only after a major, declared disaster, not after just any storm or emergency. Mitigation can cost money, but every dollar spent on mitigation is worth four dollars afterward.

Michelle Burda—NNLM has multiple awards available to help with emergency preparedness activities. The Emergency Preparedness/Library Partnership Award provides up to \$15,000. It supports strengthening the involvement of public and health sciences libraries in assisting with health and disaster information needs before, during and after an emergency and in building community resilience. There is also the Outreach to Consumers Award, also up to \$15,000, which could be applied to health in families related to disasters. The Health Information Awareness award, up to \$5,000, could sponsor day-long projects like family days, a day of building a kit and getting the family thinking and involving the children. The Disaster Hero game was developed with FEMA funding and Emergency Physicians—it is a game which promotes building skills for various scenarios, eventually becoming “heroes.” Awards can be used for purchasing equipment like LED screens and headphones.

“Considering People with Access and Functional Needs in Disaster Response and Recovery”

Phyllis Guinivan, Ph.D., Program Manager, and Rochelle Brittingham, Ph.D., Program Coordinator, Emergency Preparedness for Individuals with Disabilities, Center for Disabilities Studies, University of Delaware



Phyllis Guinivan (seated) and Rochelle Brittingham

Rochelle Brittingham

Sixty percent of those who died in Superstorm Sandy were disabled or elderly people who could not get out of the way of the disaster. Her work tries to address this by getting information out and increasing awareness. Libraries are important information clearinghouses; they have personal relationships with community members. In Delaware, there are 60 libraries, counting public, academic, public school and special libraries.

Those with access and functional needs (AFN) may have additional needs before, during and after an incident in functional areas, including but not limited to: maintaining independence, communication,

transportation, supervision, and medical care. They may have disabilities, live in institutionalized settings, are elderly, are children, are from diverse cultures, have limited English proficiency, or are non-English speaking, or are transportation disadvantaged. Also, AFN may or may not be present with someone with a disability.

Phyllis Guinivan

The goal of their talk is to enhance understanding of how to be welcoming, accessible, and accommodating when working with people with disabilities, and how to recognize the challenges they face. Assumptions are often incorrect when based on appearances.

Recommendations:

- Use “People First” language—address the person first, the challenge they face second
- Practice basic disability etiquette. Ask before helping, speak directly to the person, treat adults as adults, respect privacy, let the person set the pace, be sensitive about physical contact, treat personal devices as personal property.
- Consider needs/accommodations ahead of time

Categories of Disability related to function (broad, not comprehensive):

- Cognitive or intellectual—how the brain processes information—affects remembering, learning, concentrating, decision-making—may not understand information given to them
- Physical
- Sensory—impairment of one of the senses

Barriers to accessing services include physical/architectural and communication issues; be sure to look at these when restoring services after disaster.

“Accommodation” means finding another way. For example, to aid communication with someone who is deaf, remember to use a pen/pencil and paper or text with phones or other digital devices. Become familiar with what to expect when using the telephone relay system. For the hard-of-hearing, a quiet environment is best, you may need to speak louder, and always face the person to assist with lip reading.

To help someone who is blind, have documents available in Braille or in a digital format. Ask them what kind of digital file they need. Assist with navigation in the library, and assist them with filling out forms and reading text if needed. Always ask. For those who are visually impaired, have documents available in large print, digital or audio files. Magnifiers can also be helpful.

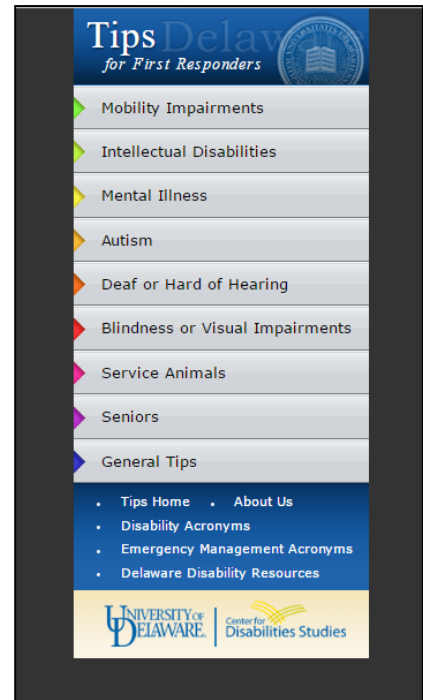
Physical disabilities may affect motor skills, and communication devices may be in use. Be patient, communicate by pointing to pictures if need be. To help communicate with someone with intellectual or cognitive disabilities, speak slowly, simplify language, allow time, use pictures or symbols.

There are many free resources available for learning more about how to accommodate those with access and functional needs:

- FEMA
- DEMA
- County organizations
- Citizen Corps: Preparedde.org

- University of Delaware and Citizen Corps: allreadyde.org
 - a guide to preparing a personal disaster plan, walks through the process of putting together a plan, contains an example for a person who is deaf, includes pet needs as well as other supplies, communication plans, documents to take when evacuating home
 - Instructions for applying for assistance
 - Options for replacing assistive technology (AT)—DATI, Goodwill, AT Exchanges
 - List of helpful apps—fuel apps, SAMHSA for mental health services

There was a question from the audience about how to assist someone who can't manage stairs to be evacuated from a multilevel building. Several people recommended the Stryker Evac Chair, which uses a tread instead of wheels to take people down or up stairs. They are expensive (\$3,000 range), but there may be funding available to assist with purchase.



<http://www.delawaretips.org/>

Libraries One-Page Disaster Plan; a resource toolkit tailored for attendees

Dan Wilson, consultant specializing in disaster planning for libraries

Ingrid Hansen, Delaware Medical Reserve Corps Unit Leader



Ingrid Hansen

Ronniere Robinson is the State Coordinator for MRC in Delaware. Ingrid is in the College of the Health Sciences at the University of Delaware, and has a contract to coordinate MRC for the three Delaware counties.

The Medical Reserve Corps has its origins in 9/11/2000 as well as the anthrax letters scare which followed. It was founded based on the experience with having numerous spontaneous volunteer healthcare people who responded to the

situation in New York City after 9/11. The situation was difficult to organize at the time. Now, MRC works with public health departments to coordinate responses to disaster.

More information about Delaware's MRC is available at <http://www.delawaremrc.org/>.

There are about 1,000 MRCs in the US. The possibility of an epidemic of H1N1 flu was the impetus for the Delaware MRC.

Dan Wilson

Dan gave a brief overview of the One-Page Disaster Plan for libraries, a document he developed as a result of experience with emergencies, and from many training sessions helping librarians develop their own disaster plans. The plan was simplified by consulting with the police and determining what information was most needed. Side one of the One-Page plan deals with communication, procedures, and business continuity, while side two covers recovery and relocation.

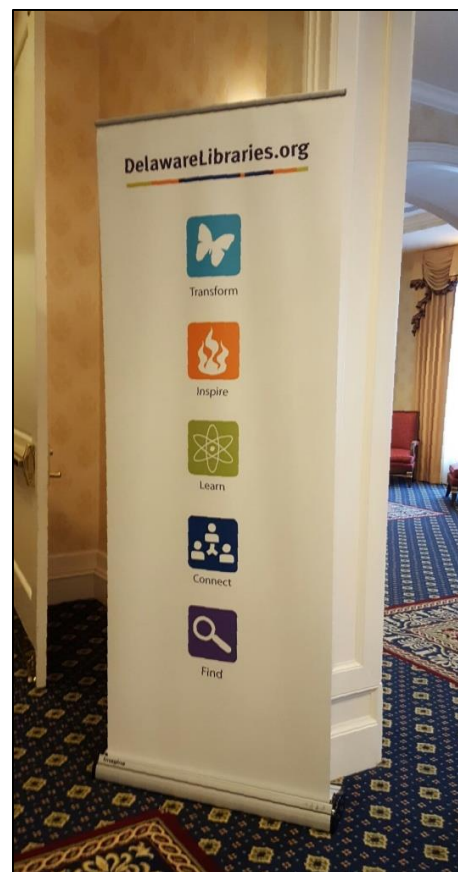
In closing, Dan encouraged the continuation of the work begun at the meeting, noting that Delaware has an outstanding group of people ready to support library efforts.

Pat Young noted three upcoming events which might be of interest to attendees. Thursday, April 6 is the Delaware Disaster Assistance spring program, which is open to everyone and will cover preservation strategies. It begins at 10 AM. On Monday, April 10, there will be a guest presenter for the Reference Services webinar, and on May 11, there will be a joint DLA/MLA conference on recovering paper-based wet materials.

At the close of the meeting, Michelle reminded everyone about the evaluation process and asked everyone to return them.

Takeaways

1. Libraries and the emergency management community can be productive partners in planning to mitigate the effects of local and regional disasters. Partnerships allow us to accomplish things neither could do alone.
2. It is important to establish lines of communication and develop the partnership before disaster strikes. Emergency managers do not want to meet partners for the first time during an emergency.
3. There are many information resources available for learning to be prepared: NNLM, DIMRC, local, state, and federal emergency management, public health departments.
4. Libraries are logical partners in response because in each community, everyone knows where the library is, and libraries are among the most trusted of institutions in their communities. They are perceived as safe spaces.
5. Ways libraries and librarians could be helpful to emergency managers and first responders in a disaster include offering space for command stations, training sessions, shelter space for the public, and if power is available, space for charging electronics and offering cooling stations. Librarians can also provide diversion for children through story times and movie viewing.



6. Librarians are information experts and can help validate information for accuracy and timeliness
7. Librarians are technologically savvy and can help monitor social media sites
8. Libraries can provide computers, internet access, and helpful staff to assist the community after a disaster
9. Libraries of different types are already networked, so can quickly and easily communicate among themselves, helping to disseminate information when needed in an emergency
10. The greatest ally an emergency planner can have is a prepared citizen. Each person should be prepared to be self-sufficient for 72 hours in order to allow first responders to do their jobs.
11. Libraries need to have completed their own emergency preparedness plan in order to be able to help their communities. The One-Page Disaster Plan is one option for completing a basic plan. Planning should include being prepared to help people with access and functional issues or physical disabilities.
12. Each of the three county groups had many good ideas for developing partnerships with emergency management, including helping get information out to the public, bookmobile services, helping the public put together preparedness kits, hosting events such as training sessions, "May Day" activities, and developing Continuity of Operations plans for themselves.
13. Several funding sources were mentioned which are available to libraries to help with preparedness activities and promoting information literacy and sharing.
14. Librarians can take advantage of opportunities to volunteer with organizations such as CERT, the Medical Reserve Corps, and the American Red Cross, all of which offer free training and which can help with building partnerships with emergency managers.
15. Participants agreed they should take advantage of the momentum gained by their discussions at the meeting and make plans to follow-up soon and develop action plans.

Report by:

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